

Abstract

A system, method and database design is provided for unifying data from a plurality of heterogeneous databases, each having business-context related data and a data access mechanism. A database is created (e.g., the UniDimNet) which contains a node for each dimension of an industry. For each data source which is accessible via the system, a set of data source specific dimensions is created and mapped to the corresponding industry business context dimension(s). A set of templates (e.g., UniViews) is created to query the data sources. Each UniView contains a specific question for a specific dimension designed for a specific data source. UniViews query the database they are associated with by using the data access mechanism of the associated database. A central server coordinates the system and facilitates use of the system through an interface (e.g., the UniViewer). The UniViewer allows a user to query the data sources by identifying an industry business context dimension, a dimension instance and at least one UniView. Multiple UniViews can be combined, cached and saved to facilitate complex queries.